



# Franklin County Conservation District Newsletter



VOL. 28 NO 3

FALL 2014

## COST SHARE PROGRAM ADDS PILOT COVER CROP PRACTICE

by Stephen Sparks



For fiscal year 2015, all 114 counties in the State of Missouri will have the ability to provide up to \$4,800 in cost share assistance for Cover Crop Pilot Practices in their county. This pilot project is to provide an opportunity for landowners/operators to implement cover crops on a limited number of acres for the fiscal year. This practice will provide a \$30 per acre incentive for landowner/operator implementing cover crops under a required no-till system, with a 20 acre maximum per landowner/operator. The incentive is to encourage the adoption of cover crops to reduce soil erosion, improve water quality and soil health.

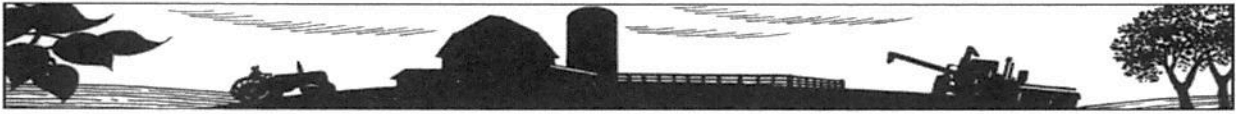
To qualify, the area must be a no-till cropland acre where row crops are grown and a cover crop management is not currently being implemented. Acreage to be planted in cover crops must be in a no-till crop rotation. All cover crop mixes must include at least 25% cool-season annual grass or small grain component. Only fall seeded cover crops are eligible and must be left undisturbed until just prior to planting of primary crop. Cover

crops **cannot** be grazed or mechanically harvested. When applying for annual cover crop cost share assistance, a ranking sheet will be completed to prioritize the application.

If you would like to participate or would like more information on this practice, feel free to contact Stephen Sparks at the office 636-583-2303 ext 112 or come by the office at 1004 Vondera Ave in Union.



**SECTION  
OMITTED**



# State Cost Share

## SENSITIVE AREAS



The Sensitive Area resource concern addresses areas of agricultural land where current management has impacted erosion, surface water and/or ground water.



For the protection of water quality in streams, you can: plant grass buffers or woody species along the edges of crop fields or below cropland to trap runoff; plant trees or shrubs to reduce wind erosion; and exclude livestock from streams. To protect groundwater, you can: establish buffers or exclusion around sinkholes; create spring collection points for livestock use; and fill and seal abandoned wells.

The available practices under the sensitive area are:

- **WELL DECOMMISSIONING:** Sealing and permanent closure of a water well no longer in use; 10 year maintenance; \$400 cost share maximum per well
- **FIELD BORDER:** Installing permanent vegetation around the perimeter of a field; 10 year maintenance; reimbursed 75% of computed State Average plus one time out-of-production incentive of \$600 per acre
- **RIPARIAN FOREST BUFFER:** Installing trees on areas adjacent to streams, public water reservoirs and natural wetlands; 10 year maintenance; reimbursed 75% of computed State Average plus one time out-of-production incentive of \$1,200 per acre
- **FILTER STRIP:** Installing vegetation below cropland, grazeland or hayland to protect adjacent sensitive areas; 5 year maintenance; reimbursed 75% of computed State Average plus one time out-of-production incentive of \$1,000 per acre
- **SPRING DEVELOPMENT:** Installing collection and storage facility for springs and seep areas; 10 year maintenance; reimbursed 75% of computed State Average
- **SINKHOLE TREATMENT:** Installing a filter strip around the karst; 10 year maintenance; reimbursed 75% of computed State Average plus one time out-of-production incentive of \$300 per acre with a maximum of \$1,200 per site
- **STREAM PROTECTION:** Excluding livestock from areas adjacent to streams or natural wetlands; 10 year maintenance; reimbursed 75% of computed State Average plus one time out-of-production incentive of \$500 per acre



**If you have questions, concerns or would like a field visit to help address any above practices, please call the office.**

# CONSERVATION AT WORK



In the beginning of our fiscal 2013 year, I had a landowner that had a grazing system that used a lane system. The property had only one water source which was the creek in the center of the property next to the house that was fed by a spring.

The landowner's concern was that they were having major erosion issues in the lane. The lane had six different gullies that were formed over the course of 2 years, which ranged from 10-100 feet in length and 1-2 feet in depth, and I calculated an average loss in soil of 30 tons a year. The cause of this erosion was due to cattle needing to travel through the lane several times each day for water. The lane was steep with an average slope of 12%. Heavy traffic from livestock was killing the vegetation that was holding the soil in place, leaving it bare and susceptible to erosion.

Before we were able to assist in fixing the erosion inside the lane, we had to figure a way to eliminate the travel to the creek for water. Since the landowner had an existing grazing system and had attend grazing school, we were able to assist the landowner with our Water Distribution (DSP-3.2) Practice by installing four permanent watering facilities and 1800 feet of pipe. Each watering facilities was able to support 2-4 paddocks.

In fiscal 14, since the need for the cattle to travel to water was eliminated. We were able to assist the landowner in the repairs for the lane by grading/shaping, seeding, and mulching under our Critical Area (DSL-11) Practice. The landowner had to temporary fence out the lane from the cattle till the vegetation is well established. Then the landowner can decide to use the lane as way to move the cattle to the different paddocks or add it to the existing paddocks.

By Stephen Sparks



## **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

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**1004 Vondera Ave. • Union, MO 63084**  
**636-583-2303 • 855-535-5203**

*The Franklin County Conservation District was organized in 1944 with a primary objective to solve soil and water conservation problems. The District, upon request, aids in planning and applying appropriate land use and conservation treatment measures.*

## **OFFICE STAFF PERSONNEL**

Lori Nowak, District Clerk, FCSWCD  
Stephen Sparks, District Technician, FCSWCD

Rhonda Davault, District Conservationist, NRCS  
Kervin Bryant, Soil Conservationist, NRCS  
Teresa Morris, Soil Conservationist, NRCS  
Jerry Busch, Area Soil Technician, NRCS

Lia Heppermann, Private Land Conservationist, MDC  
Ryan Diener, Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist



# SOIL HEALTH KEY POINTS

## What's critical about soil health now?

1. World population is projected to increase from 7 billion in 2013 to more than 9 billion in 2050. To sustain this level of growth, food production will need to rise by 70 percent.
2. Between 1982–2007, 14 million acres of prime farmland in the U.S. were lost to development.
3. Improving soil health is key to long-term, sustainable agricultural production.

## Soil health matters because:

1. Healthy soils are high-performing, productive soils.
2. Healthy soils reduce production costs—and improve profits.
3. Healthy soils protect natural resources on **and** off the farm.
4. Franklin Roosevelt's statement, "The nation that destroys its soil destroys itself," is as true today as it was 75 years ago.
5. Healthy soils can reduce nutrient loading and sediment runoff, increase efficiencies, and sustain wildlife habitat.

## What are the benefits of healthy soil?

1. Healthy soil holds more water (by binding it to organic matter), and loses less water to runoff and evaporation.
2. Organic matter builds as tillage declines and plants and residue cover the soil. Organic matter holds 18-20 times its weight in water and recycles nutrients for plants to use.
3. One percent of organic matter in the top six inches of soil would hold approximately 27,000 gallons of water per acre!
4. Most farmers can increase their soil organic matter in **three to 10 years** if they are motivated about adopting conservation practices to achieve this goal.

## How to begin your path to Healthy Soils:

1. Keep it covered.
2. Do not disturb.
3. Use cover crops and rotation to feed your soil.
4. Develop a **soil health management plan** with the help of NRCS.

## Follow four basic soil health principles to improve soil health and sustainability:

1. Use plant diversity to increase diversity in the soil.
2. Manage soils more by disturbing them less.
3. Keep plants growing throughout the year to feed the soil.
4. Keep the soil covered as much as possible.

## What is a Soil Health Management Plan?

1. It's a roadmap to soil health.
2. It outlines a system of practices needed to enhance crop production and soil function, and improve or sustain water quality, air quality, energy efficiency and wildlife habitat.  
Some of the recommended conservation practices include: Conservation Crop Rotation, Cover Crops, No Till, Mulching, Nutrient Management, and Pest Management.
3. It provides environmental, economic, health, and societal benefits.
4. It **saves energy** by using less fuel for tillage, and maximizes nutrient cycling.
5. It **saves water** and increases drought tolerance by increasing infiltration and water holding capacity as soil organic matter increases.
6. It **reduces disease** and pest problems.
7. It **improves income sustainability** for farms and ranches.
8. It **improves plant health**.

## 2015 POSTER CONTEST THEME



We can thank pollinators for one in three mouthfuls of food and drink – everything from coffee and chocolate to most fruits and many vegetables in our diet. Pollination is also critical for many of the animal products we consume, including dairy products, beef, pork and poultry. These animals consume insect-pollinated legumes such as alfalfa and clover at some time during their growth. When we start to think about what we ate yesterday for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, we start to understand the importance of pollinators in our own diets.

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**SECTION  
OMITTED**

## Area II – Brueggemann Brothers



Our Area II Outstanding Farmer award goes to the Brueggemann Brothers. Herb and Jim acquired the family farm from their father in 1976. Through the years, the Brueggemann's have purchased additional acreage making the farm over 1200 acres. Part of this farm is a century farm.

This farm is located in the Union area and has woodland, cropland and pastureland. Half the farm is cropland where a corn/soybean rotation is used. Depending on the weather conditions every now and then milo and wheat are planted. Prior to 1997, hogs were raised on the farm. But currently, a mix Angus/Salers cattle herd grazes the pasturelands. Crops and cattle have been present for most of the life of the farm.

The Brueggemann Brothers have installed a waterway, diversion, water impoundment reservoir and terraces to protect their farm from soil erosion. Not always is this easy, for the Bourbeuse River makes a horseshoe boundary around the farm. And in raining seasons, the river often claims a portion of the farm fields.

For hobbies, Herb does woodworking in the shop behind the house and Jim likes to hunt, fish and trap for coons and beavers. Herb and Jim's families love to be at the farm every chance they get.

Keep up the great conservation work and Congratulations to the Brueggemann Brothers!



FRANKLIN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
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## COMING EVENTS

Monday, October 13, 2014  
USDA Service Center closed  
Columbus Day Holiday

Tuesday, October 14, 2014  
SWCD Regular Board Meeting  
8:00 a.m., USDA Service Center

Tuesday, November 11, 2014  
USDA Service Center closed  
Veteran's Day Holiday

Thursday, November 27, 2014  
USDA Service Center closed  
Thanksgiving Day Holiday

Tuesday, December 9, 2014  
SWCD Regular Board Meeting  
8:00 a.m., USDA Service Center

Wed - Fri, Dec 10-12, 2014  
Employee Training Conference  
District Office Closed

Call to confirm meeting date and times. All regular meetings are open to the public.



### Quarterly Quote

*"only rarely have we stood back and celebrated our soils  
as something beautiful and perhaps even mysterious.*

*For wat other natural body, worldwide in its  
Distribution, has so many interesting secrets to reveal  
to the patient ovserver"*

—Les Molloy

# THANK YOU

The District Board appreciates the cooperation of the businesses that advertise in our newsletter and hope that our readers patronize these advertisers. The Board especially appreciates the financial assistance of the Franklin County Commission. Thanks also to our partners in conservation: NRCS, FSA, DNR, University Extension, MDC, Quail Forever. Assistance from the Soil and Water Conservation District is available to all county residents regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, gender identity, reprisal, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation or individual's income. State Cost-Share funds are available for agriculture landowners that have active erosion and are approved to complete practices that solve the erosion problem and for practices that protect our water quality.